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ABSTRACT

The grassroots Rural Communities Educational Cooperative (RCEC) made higher education accessible/affordable to adults in rural Appalachian communities, designed courses for competency-based rural education, and received high ratings from students and faculty. The Mountain Women's Exchange--a network of seven community organizations run by low-income women in Campbell County, Tennessee, and Whitley County, Kentucky--began RCEC in 1983 as part of its effort to provide training, employment, and services to women of the area. RCEC developed curriculum to identify rural leadership competencies required for someone committed to living and improving rural Appalachian communities and recruited and oriented faculty. RCEC's success demonstrated the importance of community organizations in organizing educational opportunities. RCEC offered lessons in relating college education to community improvement strategies, in collaboration with institutions of higher education, and in orienting faculty to nontraditional students. This study reports RCEC's history, goals, objectives, and evaluation processes/results and reviews program activities and surveys of students, faculty, and community leaders. A review of literature on rural adult education and on Appalachian socioeconomic trends establishes the context of the RCEC. The report emphasizes development of learner-driven competency-based adult education relevant to rural living and rural leadership training. Appendices provide survey responses, RCEC organizational structure, and course list. (LFL)

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Mountain Women's Exchange

Women working in community development

"FOR A SHARING OF LIFE'S GLORIES"

AN EVALUATION OF THE

RURAL COMPETENCIES CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

OF THE

RURAL COMMUNITIES EDUCATIONAL COOPERATIVE

"for a sharing of life's glories"

Rural Communities Educational Cooperative

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This evaluation is part of the Rural Competencies/Curriculum Development (Grant #G008440482) of the United States Department of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education, to the Rural Communities Educational Cooperative of the Mountain Women's Exchange, September 1, 1984 to August 31, 1986.

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SUMMARY

The Mountain Women's Exchange is a network of seven grassroots community organizations run mainly by low-income women in rural Appalachian communities of Campbell County, Tennessee and Whitley County, Kentucky. The Exchange began Rural Communities Educational Cooperative (RCEC) in the spring of 1983 as part of its broad effort to provide training, employment and services to women of the area. Women of the Exchange realized through their previous change efforts that educated local leadership is key to successful community development and consequently sought to make higher education accessible, affordable and relevant for adults of the area. Increased educational opportunities would assist local residents to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to enhance their personal lives and to improve their communities. RCEC undertook curriculum development: to identify rural leadership competencies, skills, and knowledge required for someone committed to living and improving rural Appalachian communities; to design course offerings suited to impart these competencies; and to recruit and orient faculty to conduct this curriculum.

This study reports the history, goals and objectives of the RCEC and evaluates its effort to achieve its several objectives. The RCEC has succeeded in making higher education accessible and affordable to adults in a rural area without ordinary access to college level courses. It has designed several courses with unique characteristics and adapted others which contribute to increased competencies of RCEC students. Evaluations of students and faculty report a high level of satisfaction with RCEC.

The RCEC's two year rural competencies curriculum development effort offers many lessons. It demonstrates the important role of a community organization in organizing educational opportunities in rural, low-income areas and for adults with few educational opportunities and modest educational background. It offers important lessons on the difficult tasks of relating college education to community improvement strategies. It this regard, it is apparent that students report increased competencies that are important leadership skills. RCEC also demonstrates some key issues of securing on-going collaboration from institutions of higher education and recruiting and orienting faculty for new roles in the education of a new set of learners. This report provides information on a series of issues which are familiar: adult education; competency-based curriculum; and economic development. It offers new information about the relation of these issues because RCEC has attempted to combine them in an innovative and unique manner.

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THE MOUNTAIN WOMEN'S EXCHANGE

Jellico, Tennessee, the home of the Rural Communities Educational Cooperative (RCEC), lies in northern Campbell County on the Kentucky border. The lumber and coal extracted from the mountains there have been the basis of the area's economy for many decades. Since the first railroads were built, the history of the region has been symbolically represented by trains leaving the region ladened with its mineral wealth and returning to the region empty. This extractive economy extends to human resources as well. Many people have had to leave the region to find employment and less and less human capital investment has entered the region. The mining companies required only semi-skilled labor from the area in the best of times and with their decline in the 1950s they had less incentive to invest in enhancing the economic, social and educational life of the local communities. The Appalachian extractive economy and its corresponding set of inadequate social services have traditionally meant that finding economic and eduational opportunity entails moving from the community and the region.

The conditions of the communities which RCEC serves are part of the impetus that 20 years ago initiated the War on Poverty. While many of the agencies and programs developed in the 1960s have disappeared along with their federal funding, a network of individuals and organizations committed to community development has remained in this part of southern Appalachia. RCEC fits in the context of subsequent efforts of community improvement in the area since the War on Poverty. The community development activities of the 1960s and 1970s spawned clinics, a child care center, a community land trust, a development council and several social service centers the continued existence of which is testimony to the ability and determination of a number of local leaders. The excellence of the leaders and the magnitiude of their achievement have attracted national attention and recognition. In 1979, Tilda Kemplen, director of the child care center, received the Jefferson Award for outstanding public service

and Bobbie Jean McKiddy, director of the Mulberry Friendship Center, received national recognition from ACTION.

The success of the organizing projects in this area are in part attributable to the early realization on the part of local women that only capable and motivated local leaders can deal adequately with the difficult problems of poverty and economic underdevelopment facing the mountain communities. Many of those in the area who came to this understanding of community development are represented by the Mountain Women's Exchange which formed as a coalition of diverse women's groups in 1978.

The Mountain Women's Exchange is an important and positive legacy of the War on Poverty, but another legacy is the continuing problems of poverty and poor educational attainment which the Exchange and RCEC are addressing. Citing the finding of the Presidential Commission on Rural Life, in 1967, that, "Rural adults and youth are the products of an educational system that has historically short changed rural people", the RCEC founders added a corollary. Being on the short end of the stick educationally is being on the bottom rung of the ladder economically. In Campbell County, only 37.5% of the over-25 population were high school graduates in 1980. In contrast, 56.2% of the adults in Tennessee and 66.5% of the adults in the entire U.S. had 12 or more years of education. According to the Tennessee Department of Employment Security, unemployment in the county remains at 13% in August of 1986 despite a national economic recovery. It is double or triple that in rural parts of the county. There is considerably more unofficial unemployment in the area, people who have given up looking for work or have never had a regular job. In 1980, when the median household income for the United States was $16,841, it was $14,142 for Tennessee and only $10,277 for Campbell Co. One-fourth of the people in the county and 32.3% of the population of Jellico itself had incomes less than the poverty level in 1980.

The women who came together to form Mountain Women's Exchange in 1978 found that they had considerable motivation and organizing skill, a need for more education and impediments to acquiring it. Like many women in the community, some of them had both full time jobs and primary child-rearing responsibilities. Existing educational opportunities for adults were at places too remote and too expensive to be of use to most residents. At a time that the nation was calling for educational reform, the need for such reform and barriers to it were obvious to the leaders of the Mountain Women's Exchange. This was articulated in the RCEC curriculum development project proposal to FIPSE:

> While the nation stirs with renewed interest in "improving the quality of education," of retraining workers for high tech and growth industries and of revitalizing economically; small rural communities are playing catch-up ball in a different field. Education is a costly proposition. It requires resources of

> money, trained and talented personnel and organization to succeed. By and large, government and the private sector economy have found that cost too great to bear in rural areas and for select population segments, such as adult low-income women.

The needs of the people of Campbell County as well as their ability prompted Mountain Women's Exchange to establish a new vehicle for delivering educational services. They intended these services to further both the organization's immediate goals to develop their various organizations and also its fundamental goal to contribute to the development of local communities. This new vehicle was the RCEC which the Exchange began forming in October 1982 to make higher education accessible, affordable and relevant for low income adults, especially women, living in the area. Through a contractual arrangement with Roane State Community College, RCEC began providing college credit courses in the spring of 1983 to 25 adult students.

RCEC, according to the proposal to FIPSE, intended a different education as well as increased access, because RCEC grew from the awareness of the women of the Exchange, the sponsor of RCEC, that a key to rural community development is educated local leadership:

> Women and men who would acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to enhance their personal lives and to make a contribution to the betterment of local rural communities. While mainstream education often prepares students to leave home communities for more promising urban settings, the RCEC program would focus on the needs of students who have chosen for reasons of home, land, family and life-style preference, to remain in rural communities.

In 1984, the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) of the United States Department of Education provided a two year grant to RCEC which permitted it to do much needed curriculum development on rural competencies and to disseminate its work. The specific objectives of RCEC during this two year grant were the following:

to identify rural leadership competencies - those skills and knowledge which are essential and desirable for someone who is committed to living and working in rural Appalachian communities;

to align these competencies with course offerings designed by the RCEC curriculum committee, advisors and a liaison person from the parent institution;

to utilize the community-as-laboratory approach and draw materials and faculty resources from both the parent institution and community organizations with long-term commitment to the region; and

to share with educators and other community groups the RCEC model of organization, the competencies identified and the curriculum RCEC developed.

METHODOLOGY

The goals and objectives of the RCEC are the major focus of this survey. Consequently, this evaluation contains a review of the activities taken to achieve the objectives of the RCEC and a survey of the opinions of students and faculty of RCEC. In addition, there is a review of the literature on rural adult education and on socio-economic trends in Appalachia to establish the context of the work of RCEC and its relation to other efforts. In conducting this work we collaborated closely with the staff and advisory board of RCEC to relate the evaluation to their concerns about the operation of RCEC as well as its goals and objectives. We conducted the evaluation with two audiences in mind in addition to FIPSE; namely, other rural communities and other institutions of higher education which might be interested in developing a similar college program. The evaluation is summative in one sense but formative of RCEC's on-going effort as well as the effort of other groups which may emulate RCEC.

The staff and advisory board of RCEC had four major concerns which we set out to address: First, the history and development of RCEC including the pros and cons of the approach and the institutional linkages used; second, the effectiveness of the curriculum design and its focus on rural leadership development; third, the benefits to individual students including new community involvement or the enhancement of existing community involvement; and fourth, the opinion of business and political leaders in the community of RCEC and its contribution to improved competencies of its students.

We depended heavily on the written material of RCEC and interviews with the coordinator of the program, the curriculum coordinator and the advisory board of RCEC. We met with the RCEC curriculum committee and interviewed various members of the committee. We reviewed all the written material on the RCEC including newspaper articles, minutes from the curriculum committee meetings, and course catalogs and descriptions. The work of the curriculum coordinator is particularly well-documented. The program director and curriculum coordinator made extensive efforts to respond to our questions and inquiries. They went into considerable depth in their written responses and supported their views with references to the minutes from various meetings, notices sent to students and letters from students and faculty.

The major effort of the evaluation was a series of mailed surveys. Three different questionnaires were sent to the three groups surveyed: all past and present students; all past and present faculty; and community leaders in the area served by RCEC. The

overall goal of the surveys was twofold. First, it was designed to assess the success of RCEC in achieving its goal of providing accessible, affordable and relevant education to low-income, rural adults. The second aim was focused on the issue of relevance. We sought to understand the degree to which the curriculum was meeting the specific needs of its students.

We designed the student surveys to identify who was participating in the program and what they were getting out of their participation. We sought to determine if the program is serving students who would otherwise not have taken college-level courses and if the students are in any way different than the students who pursued adult education in other settings. We were interested in determining what different motivations brought students to the program, what they sought and to what degree they found what they needed in the RCEC curriculum. Finally, we sought to establish the impacts RCEC was having on the various students including new or enhanced forms of community participation. We were also interested in the students' views on what parts of the curriculum were of particular value and what needed improvement. There were eighty-five past and present students in RCEC at the time of the survey. We sent surveys to 80 students and received 46 completed surveys.

We surveyed the faculty to determine their reasons for participating in RCEC, how they had heard about the program and their perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of the program and its curriculum. We had a particular concern with the modifications the faculty made in courses to adapt them for the RCEC students and their views on such modifications. Another major concern was the incentives and disincentives to faculty participation. There were 20 past and present faculty in RCEC at the time of our survey. We sent surveys to all 20 and received 18 completed surveys. In addition, G. Lawrence Osborne, a faculty member of Carson-Newman College and RCEC, shared with us a draft of a study about the college and its participation in RCEC.

We designed the surveys of the community leaders to determine if they recognized increased involvement by the students in community affairs or their improved competencies. We sent surveys to 20 business and political leaders in the community who were selected from a list provided by RCEC members and by position or title, e.g. bank president, newspaper editor, etc. Only six surveys were completed and returned which makes this the portion of the survey with the lowest rate of response and the most incomplete information.

THEORY AND PRACTICE IN RURAL ADULT EDUCATION

The RCEC uniquely combines adult education and rural development in a competency curriculum. Not surprisingly then, there is little literature directly relevant to RCEC. There is however a good deal of literature dealing with the components of RCEC and the context of its effort. We will examine some of the literature which deals with several components of RCEC. These include: the Appalachian economy; initiatives in adult education; competency-based educational programs; and education for economic development.

The Appalachian Economy

The Appalachian region is the specific context of the RCEC effort. Too often commentators distinguish Appalachia and its economy as apart from the mainstream American economy and in need of integration and development. This is a mistake for two reasons. First, the conditions of the Appalachian region are a consequence of its pattern of development and not the consequence of no development. Secondly, the depressed economic conditions of the Appalachian region bear striking similarity to other sectors of the American economy. Consequently, the effort of RCEC is important because of the place of Campbell and Whitley Counties, and other Appalachian counties, in the American economy.

The area served by RCEC certainly demonstrates the economic vulnerability of rural economies. Agriculture has never been viable on a large scale in the mountainous Southern Appalachian region and the destruction of the soil from coal mining and poor soil management has further damaged its viability. Henry Caudill's landmark work, Night Comes to the Cumberlands, describes the history of coal industry control, its impact on the public sector and the provision of public services. John Gaventa's book, Power and Powerlessness, deals in greater depth with some of the issues Caudill explores and is concerned almost exclusively with the section of Appalachia near RCEC. These studies examine the period of industrialization and the introduction of the welfare state in the region and explain partially a legacy of poor tax bases and inadequate public services. This inadequacy extends to education and pertains to other rural areas in addition to Appalachia (Bell, 1984).

The Appalachian economy continues to change. The broad development of American de-industrialization is prominent in the Appalachian region. The major industries of the region, steel, coal and textiles, are all in serious decline and offer less employment. New employment, in Appalachia's post-industrial economy, is in component manufacturing and in the service sector for the most part. In practical terms, this means less jobs with high wages and fringe benefits and more jobs in minimum wage jobs, with few fringe benefits and without collective representation. Appalachian women, like women

elsewhere, have increased their participation in the work force of an economy that affords them limited opportunities in low paying jobs (Marshall). They have taken this action in part because the changes of deindustrialization have meant a decline in family income. Fewer employment opportunities at low wages have established grave threats to female-headed households and, increasingly, to male and female households. A survey conducted in the summer of 1983 reported the incidence of hunger among young mothers and pregnant women, some of whom live in Whitley County, in both female and male-female headed households (Couto, 1984; 1986).

The labor force status of women in Appalachia parallel the status of women nationally, especially in rural areas, where labor-intense agricultural production has been replaced with capital intense production forms (Moen et al.; Smith; Weiss). The feminization of poverty is now followed by the feminization of the low wage spectrum of the labor market. Despite the increased participation of women in the labor force of Appalachia they still lag behind the rate of women nationally. In 1982, for example, in West Virginia 36 percent of white women and 39 percent of black women were labor force participants compared with 53 percent nationally (Hall). There are several reasons for this lower participation rate including: labor force participation declines when unemployment is high as it has been in Central Appalachia; women have little opportunity for well-paying jobs, their employment is concentrated in low wage work or they are paid less than men for comparable work; and, the prospects of wages have to be balanced with the costs of employment including transportation and especially child care (Couto, 1986).

The Mountain Women's Exchange is a response to the decline of the coal industry and the limited employment opportunities for women. Its response parallels the economic development efforts of other women's groups in other rural areas (Gibbs and Fowler). To enhance the employment prospects of women in the area and to increase the skills of the women active in its programs, the Exchange complemented its economic development work with an adult education effort. This effort and experience parallel that of the Dungannon Development Corporation in Southwestern Virginia. The effort of the Exchange and the Exchange itself illustrate the nature and utility of "mediating structures" (Berger and Neuhaus). These organizations mediate between the needs of individuals and the institutions of the government, the economy or education, simultaneously advocating for groups of people with these institutions and implementing the programs of the institutions.

Rural Adult Education

Adult education has recently been "discovered" as a field and its literature, research and theory are only beginning to emerge and catch up to the changes adult education encompasses. The discovery of the adult education follows upon the changed demographics of higher

education. The number of traditional-age college students has declined since 1979 and by 1994 this portion of college students is expected to be lower by 25 percent while the number of older students began to increase dramatically in the mid-1970s (Scott). Two-thirds of non-traditional age students in 1979 were women. Between 1975-8, women between 24 and 34 years of age increased their college enrollment 187 percent (Lynch et al.). The increase in the number of adult learners has encouraged recent research on learning styles and needs that accompany the life cycle and the suggestion that this research fashion curriculum for adult learners (Hentges; Cross; Parrott and Flude). But as recently as 1984, there were few journal articles dealing with the instruction of adult learners (Backus).

Adult learners in rural areas have received less attention than other adult learners despite their increased participation in higher education and their special needs. Several authors note that rural adult learners share many characteristics with urban adult learners. Both groups, "prefer courses that are directly relevant to their life situations, need flexibility of scheduling and course location, and respond best to content that is learner driven" (Spears and Maes, 19; Barker).

But there are noticeable differences between rural and urban adult learners. In general, rural adult learners tend to be older; to have less formal education, fewer study skills and less confidence in their academic ability; and to have larger families which make for larger demands outside the classroom and fewer quiet spaces to study. In addition, because they often have less income and live in sparsely populated areas at some distance from educational institutions, there are higher costs in providing them instruction (Barker; Treadway). Spears and Maes distinguished rural adult learners by their restricted educational opportunities and much greater need for models of collaboration between educational institutions and learners in economic development.

In addition, these authors summarize several important trends that affect rural education across the nation. First, the migration to rural areas of the 1970s has halted except in recreational areas. The brief counter-urbanizing period is over and population-driven models for providing educational resources, including those for the adult-learner movement, will continue to short-change rural America. Second, the economic recovery that has reached a portion of most urban areas has not reached the rural areas with the same benefits and those areas continue to deal with the hardships characteristic of the recessions of 1981 and 1982 with fewer public resources. But rural learners are similar in their aspirations as well as their problems. Margery Walker, of the Rural Education program at the University of Alaska, describes needs and issues there in terms similar to those described by the RCEC.

> Rural residents now want more than the occasional course sanctioned for field delivery by campus departments. They seek coherent programs in their community which will result in a tangible body of skills and knowledge, and in degrees and certification competitive to those of their campus counterparts. Rural students are extremely diverse in their interests, heritages, educational levels, lifestyles and economic situation, but they share a common difficulty in securing access to college and university programs suited to their current needs.

Academic institutions have accommodated the growth in adult learners in several ways. There are model programs of recruitment, orientation and retention of adult learners to on-campus programs (Lynch, Doyle and Chickering). In addition, traditional educational services to rural adults, the extension service for example, have increased and modified their programs to new needs (Barker). There are also new programs extending new models of adult education, Free Universities for example, to rural areas (Killacky). Taken together the innovations in rural adult education are many and diverse and include the efforts of campuses to reach out to rural areas and of community groups in rural areas to reach out to campuses (Spears and Maes).

The set of accommodations and innovations of academic institutions for adult learners are far from satisfactory however. Studies show academic institutions to be relatively inflexible with their curriculum and their fees despite a new set of students with needs different than the students around whom schools built their fee structure and curriculum (Barker). In addition, the lack of integration of external degree programs into the mainstream of academic institutions produces fragmented approaches to non-traditional learners. This includes a demand that programs for non-traditional learners be financially self-sufficient even though they generate limited revenues. The consequence of this is a lack of services, library, audio-visual, etc., and underpaid or underqualified faculty who serve within the program "on the cheap" either for a limited period of time or unsatisfactorily (Scott).

There are other problems in academic institutions addressing the needs of rural learners. First, the high-tech, distance delivery systems of education, e.g. satellite broadcast, "are best suited to the already well-educated and will not be used by the under-educated" (Spears and Maes, 22). In economically depressed areas where both individuals and the public educational system are hard-pressed to survive economically, the hardware for these new technological innovations are likely to come late. Second, declining enrollments have meant less revenues for academic institutions which has led some institutions to retract services or to retreat to a more circumscribed curriculum. At the same time, the changes in academia have meant the underemployment of some faculty at community colleges or rural

institutions who feel overqualified for their institution and the loss of employment for some faculty. Spears and Maes found rural educators in Appalachia complaining of community colleges, "choosing to be the bottom rung of the academic ladder rather than the top of the community ladder" (Spears and Maes, p.23).

Furthermore even the best-intentioned efforts of academic institutions to adjust to non-traditional learners are beset with serious problems. A learner-driven curriculum will be fragmented by the diversity among adult learners. This is true especially in the instances in which there is the desire for political change among some learners or in which a special interest group has organized a curriculum which also serves learners who are not part of the group. Cancelling class so that students can attend a protest of changed eligibility standards for day care benefits may seem reasonable to members of a group such as the National Congress of Neighborhood Women and far less reasonable to students in the same class who are not members or not affected by the change in eligibility. Such situations illustrated for one instructor, "the negotiated quality of the definition of the learning situation; it shows the interplay of multiple affiliations, agendas, interests, and cross pressures" (Hyland, 36).

Despite the problems of mixed agendas and interests among academic institutions, learners and community groups, one recent study judged the concept that education "can serve not only the interests of individual learners and of the broader, collective society but also the specialized interests of organized community groups that exist between these extremes" holds the promise to become, "the guiding purpose of community colleges and of other educational institutions that are deeply rooted in the localities that these institutions exist to serve" (Martorana and Piland,1). There are models of this form of institutional purpose in the Highlander Research and Education Center (Adams, 1972; 1975); LaGuardia Community College (Hyland); and the College for Human Services (Grant and Riesman). However, even with these models there is not much literature on how colleges can achieve the purpose of serving the educational needs of organized community groups. One major study suggests:

> ...Community-based institutions will have to ask and seek answers largely on their own to these big questions:
>
> 1. Why should the new approach be tried?
>
> 2. What forces within the institution will tend to facilitate positive response to the challenge and which ones will generate negative conditions?
>
> 3. What forces outside of the institution will provide support for or resistance to the undertaking? (Martorana and Piland, 86)

There is important promise to the community-based approach to adult learners. Marilyn Gittell, for example, found that community-based effort had far more success than academic institutions in reaching the hard to reach students and providing them access (Gittell). But along with access, a community-based approach requires serious consideration of the adequacy of the curriculum. In fact, reconsideration of traditional curriculum is not only a perennial occupation of traditional colleges but incumbent upon all institutions with the influx of new, non-traditional learners (Dickey). Among the curriculum reforms often considered for adult learners, and one which the RCEC adopted, is the competency-based curriculum.

A Competency-Based Curriculum

Alverno College in Milwaukee is a pioneer in the competency-based curriculum which it adopted in 1973 (Read; Olive). Part of the success of the curriculum is extensive assessment of students and reevaluation of the curriculum in light of changing demands in the off-campus world (Mentkowski and Loacker). Alverno involved students, faculty and professionals and residents of the community to establish its competency-based curriculum of eight areas. These areas are: communication skills; analytical abilities; value judgments and individual decision making; social interaction; understanding the relation of the individual and the environment; awareness and understanding of world affairs; knowledge and understanding of the arts and the humanities; and workable problem-solving skills (Hayenga and Isaacson).

The success of Alverno has inspired others to specify the relation of competency-based study to the liberal arts (Knott), specialized study such as agriculture (Amberson; McCormick) and allied health (Broski). A competency-based program seems particularly suited for adult learners because it is learner driven and provides for several methods of awarding credit for acquired competencies including credit for experiential learning (Hayenga and Isaacson).

Education and Economic Development

One criteria of competence and a recurring theme in discussions of rural adult education is the relation of skills to the workplace (Spears and Maes). Berg's work makes clear that productivity and employment are better associated with competencies than arbitrary educational criteria (Berg). Given the deindustrialization of the American, including the rural economy, it is appropriate to gear the competencies of rural adult learners to the specific and unique economic opportunities that will be present in rural areas. However, the preponderance of state and federal legislation is still in the direction of wedding education and big business (Martorana and Garland) but this is unlikely to succeed in rural areas. Stuart

Rosenfeld, director of programs and research for the Southern Growth Policies Board, suggests that the strength of the rural, southern economy is small business with strong community ties and local development. To develop this strength education needs to impart skills of entrepreneurship, in Rosenfeld's estimation, based on broad knowledge and independent attitudes (Rosenfeld).

The literature dealing with the components of the RCEC effort suggests the complexity of its undertaking. It combines a response to chronic economic depression with a program of college studies for women primarily. RCEC is at the interface of the need of academic institutions to assimilate and accommodate a new set of leaders and the need of community groups to acquire competencies for its members, itself and its community. For these reasons, the effort of the RCEC is of broad interest and importance.

In addition, there is evidence that the needs and aspirations which prompted the RCEC and its effort to develop a rural competency curriculum are felt widely by other women and have been felt for at least a decade. Kathryn Clarenbuch, in her 1977 report to the National Advisory Council of Women's Education Programs, articulated a set of goals for rural adult women learners that are similar to those of the RCEC and the Exchange:

> In spite of both geographic spread and the great diversity of culture, ethnicity, age, family circumstances, economics, and educational attainment represented by the rural women involved in the Council's investigation, there is striking similarity of perceived need. The message brought to the Advisory Council by the rural women was essentially this: rural women want to speak for themselves and have their voices solicited and listened to; they want to be recognized as significant and contributing members of their families and of society at large; they want to have an opportunity to become independent persons, to control their own lives, to have a role in the formulation of public policy, and to share somewhat equitably in the fruits of our society (Treadway, 13).

RURAL COMMUNITIES EDUCATIONAL COOPERATIVE

Formation and First Tasks

According to the initial proposal to FIPSE, the RCEC was intended "to overcome the barriers of rural poverty, isolation and lack of resources both financial and personnel, by building on the strengths

inherent in Appalachian communities—a strong sense of family, a need to have local control (not being run by "outsiders"), and an ability to do a lot with a little." The founders of RCEC also wrote that,

> RCEC grew out of the awarenesss on the part of the women of the (Mountain Women's) Exchange that a key to rural economic development and the betterment of community services was educated local leadership: women and men who had skills in areas of management, business development and social services provision, and who had the awareness of history, politics, natural resources and culture necessary to give them the assurance and perspective needed for personal success and community betterment.

Initial planning for RCEC began in October, 1982 with the formation of a ten-member advisory committee of residents of the communities served by the Exchange. The advisory committee was charged with three tasks:

1. To determine how much interest there was among low-income residents in getting a college education;

2. To meet with potential cooperating institutions to negotiate a contract to provide academic sponsorship; and

3. To work out the details of organization, membership and financing for the RCEC, so that it would become operational in the fall of 1983.

The committee soon discovered that the interest in higher education among the Exchange members was indeed reflected in the community at large. After two weeks of word-of-mouth advertising, 150 people had signed indications of interest in taking college course.

The committee then moved on to the second task of finding an academic institution to provide instruction and credit for courses. The response of academic institutions was not as heartening as the response the planners had found in the community regarding their initial measure of interest. Planners recalled meeting with presidents and deans of five academic institutions and finding only one possibile working arrangement which had serious shortcomings. As was reported in the proposal to FIPSE:

> Representatives of the committee...obtained an initial six-month contract with Roane State Community College in Harriman,

Tennessee. The community college was willing to work in a sponsorship capacity but adminstrators informed us that since they had already met and exceeded their enrollment limit set by the State Higher Education Commission, there would be no state funds to support their involvement with Rural Communities Educational Cooperative, and that financing would be a problem.

We discovered a basic inequity in the state of Tennessee system of subsidizing higher education: students from counties such as Anderson, Roane and Knox, which were nearest to the community college and which had excellent educational attainment levels and low unemployment levels, made up the bulk of the enrollment at the community college - 76%. Over 100 miles away in the rural, mountainous areas of Campbell County, where educational attainment was the lowest and people were the poorest, we were told that providing off-campus courses would have to be done at our own expense since state subsidies were used up.

The adminstrators at Roane State were sympathetic to the complaints by the RCEC representatives of unfairness in the apportionment of state funding and the provision of community college education and encouraged RCEC to undertake a lobbying effort to redress the problems with new legislation. RCEC representatives did meet once with State Senator James Elkins but decided they did not have the resources of time and personnel to carry out a lobbying campaign. They decided instead to devote the resources they had to begin the college. They invested their energies in recruiting students and raising scholarship monies. The RCEC designed and disseminated a brochure that was part of a successful campaign to raise scholarship monies. Church and private sources supplemented federal Pell grants and state tuition grants to provide students, with low incomes, sufficient tuition subsidies and to provide the program a fairly stable, if limited, economic base.

Committee members undertook other activities to begin the program, their primary task. The advisory committee developed by-laws, conducted membership drives, applied for a charter of organization in Tennessee and recruited students for the first quarter of classes in the spring of 1983. In keeping with the objective of linking education to community development, a cooperative form of organization was selected. This provided for local leadership, membership accountability and decision-making among a broad base of participants. In this initial implementation effort, the committee ironed out dozens of details and learned the academic administrative subculture of curriculum requirements, transfer credits, financial aid, qualifications for teachers, and the many other elements involved in running a college program.

The First Year

In the spring of 1983, RCEC was underway academically and developmentally. In the first quarter, math and English courses were offered and students voted for board members to run the cooperative. They selected five of their own members to do management, planning and policy making for the group and approved the formation of an advisory board to assist in curriculum development. Anne Hablas, the education director on the Mountain Women's Exchange staff, served to coordinate the program. The Exchange obtained a portion of her salary for the first year from the Association for Community Based Education of which the Exchange is a member. When the six month contract with Roane State Community College expired, RCEC negotiated a second contract with them which extended to the end of the summer of 1984.

By the spring of 1984, RCEC demonstrated momentum. It offered its third quarter of classes and was planning for its first summer session. Sixteen different courses had been offered by eight teachers. Twenty-five students attended the initial courses offered in the spring of 1983. Forty-two students enrolled for the fall 1983 quarter and 36 for the spring 1984 quarter.

Students have participated in RCEC for a variety reasons. Because the students possess a range of career and personal goals, their educational needs are many. The largest single group of students are pursuing a business-oriented curriculum, while others are training for education, medical and social service careers. Other students are trying to develop themselves through education generally. Younger students participate in RCEC with the intention of transferring to campus later for full-time study.

The students, as members of the cooperative, exercise considerable responsibility for the project. The student board gives time to the direction of RCEC over and above the time required for class work and their own full time jobs and/or family responsibilities. One student was hired to handle registration and bookkeeping. Many of the students participate in membership meetings and on committees and are learning what it means to have input and ownership of a program.

RCEC had been active in the recuitment of faculty as well as students and had recruited all but one of the original eight teachers. Five of the eight faculty, all RCEC recruits, were involved in projects with rural Appalachian people at the time they taught. The economics instructor had assisted a group of women in Dungannon, Virginia, to begin a worker-owned sewing factory and remains active in economic development work. The science instructor is currently on the

staff of Appalachia, Science in the Public Interest, an organization that promotes regional environmental awareness and alternative technologies. The math teacher is the director of one of the several groups which form the Exchange. These teachers came from as far away as Norton, Virginia; Livingston, Kentucky; and, Knoxville, Tennessee to support RCEC in its formative stage.

Faculty are of course remunerated for their services at about $900 per course. All of the money for their salaries comes from class fees which were $75 per three credit course originally, and are $175 per three courses at present. The cost of classes has not been prohibitive for most interested participants because scholarship sources and tuition grants have been assiduously sought out and made available to prospective students. The scholarship fund now has $14,000 and is administered by a committee of community members. The Scholarship Committee devised criteria with the help of the Appalachian Educational Opportunity Center to determine eligibility after student requests exceeded the funds of the RCEC. The Student Aid Report, which determines eligibility for a Pell grant is used to determine the need of RCEC students for financial assistance from the scholarship fund. The committee awards about $1,000 per semester. This comes from the principal in the fund and continuing contributions, including those of students. The original scholarship fund came from a large grant of $4,000 from the Methodist Church's national program for women, several $1,000 contributions and myriad small donations.

A working relationship has developed between RCEC and the Appalachian Educational Opportunity Center (AEOC) of Morristown, TN which provides financial aid counseling and assistance in filling out financial aid forms. AEOC is one of 33 U.S. Department of Education-funded educational opportunity centers around the country. Its mission, to identify and actively encourage low-income adults to enroll in post-secondary educational programs, meshes well with the need of the RCEC students for financial assistance. Since the second year of the RCEC program, an AEOC counselor has regularly travelled to Jellico to meet with the students.

The initial success of the project encouraged the cooperative to pursue avenues for expansion and further development. An important need was to find an alternative institutional sponsor. Roane State is a two-year community college, but many of the RCEC students sought a full four-year degree. The RCEC found another four-year academic institution as sponsor and negotiated a contract for the 1985-6 school year with Carson-Newman College, a private liberal arts college in Jefferson City, Tennessee, 80 miles from Jellico. The second avenue for development for RCEC was to evaluate the curriculum and the degree

to which it met the needs of the students and the community and to modify and expand the curriculum so that it might better meet those needs.

Both the curriculum and institutional changes within the program occurred simultaneously and to some degree each is intertwined with the other. Some of the efforts to modify the curriculum to better fit its community development goals are hindered by the stricter requirements of the new four-year school.

RURAL COMPETENCIES CURRICULUM

It is important to specify the approach that underlies the particular RCEC approach to community development. The organizers of RCEC are motivated by care for their community and their concern about the poverty that surrounds them. The "cycle of ignorance and poverty" is not just a convenient catch phrase, but a central, painful reality RCEC organizers intend to address. In proposing to develop a relevant curriculum, RCEC realized that not all students sought to study "rural development" directly or at all. In addition, as students reach more advanced levels of study, RCEC organizers recognize the diverse needs of students. Some of them require an increased degree of specialization in course work; individual or small group instruction; or perhaps study on the campus of other institutions. RCEC organizers attempted to balance the needs of the RCEC students and the needs of the communities for skilled leadership. They also had to deal with their ability to shape portions of the curriculum and their limited ability to shape other portions. Consequently, RCEC emphasized imparting the skills and knowledge which relate to rural communities and their need for skilled leadership. This is done during the first two years of college work conducted at Jellico and through integrating specific community-related skills and knowledge with the basic skills and knowledge those introductory courses are intended to impart.

The curriculum development project began with a systematic and sustained effort to identify a set of competencies which are essential to rural living and rural leadership development. The curriculum coordinator planned and implemented a process to identify competencies for rural living. First, a meeting was held in which students discussed the questions: "What skills and competencies do you wish to obtain while you are in college that will help you achieve your goals for yourself and your community?" Following that meeting, the coordinator interviewed various students and conducted a survey to prioritize and elaborate the list developed in the initial meeting.

Nineteen students returned the questionnaire in which they were asked to "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," "strongly disagree," or express "no opinion" regarding 46 different phrases which completed the statement: "As a result of attending college, I wish to...." The board of RCEC then tabulated the results of the survey and compiled the following list of the most highly ranked skills and competencies. "As a result of attending college, I wish to learn...

1. How to make decisions
2. How to listen
3. Broader knoweldge of business
4. Human/child development
5. Discover my potential for development
6. How to become more vocal
7. How to maintain personal relationships
8. How to develop a business plan
9. How to be assertive and not lose my job
10. How to articulate my point of view
11. How to do research
12. How to cope with personal crises
13. Job development while maintaining
13. personal relationships
14. How to set up a budget
15. How to create more jobs
16. How to deal with interpersonal conflict
17. How to set goals
18. How to plan for a better life
19. How to arrive at consensus
20. Cooperation
21. Self-confidence
22. Career planning
23. Statistical information
24. How to relate to children
25. How to find a job
26. How to relax
27. How to do marketing
28. How to mobilize people around an issue
29. How to persuade others
30. How to develop patience
31. Self-acceptance
32. How to motivate people/self
33. Secretarial skills

The second objective of RCEC during its two year grant period was to design a series of special courses (or modify existing courses) which can be approved as accredited by the sponsoring institution and which will directly assist students to achieve those competencies. Courses listed in the Carson-Newman catalog were modified to suit the needs of students in the area and some special courses were offered. A prime example of catalog courses adapted for RCEC the latter is CA 490, Communications and Community Devlopment, offered in the Fall of 1985. An example of a special course which RCEC devised is the political science class. The RCEC board and the faculty, which RCEC recruited, developed a course plan for a "power analysis" of the local community.

An environmental science class developed from a Roane State course, but not in the existing Carson-Newman curriculum, is a model of the community-service oriented class. The students learned about their local environment in part by developing a nature trail guide near Rickcastle Resource Center, an alternative energy demonstration center of Appalachia - Science in the Public Interest near Livingston, Kentucky. The course has been retained in the RCEC curriculum. Other courses proposed as additions to the Carson-Newman curriculum for RCEC are ID490 Introduction to Research and ID492 Culture and Economics of Third World Countries.

The community service projects within RCEC course work also reflect the community orientation of the RCEC program. The Nature Trail is the most extensive, completed project to date, but it will doubtlessly be augmented by numerous RCEC projects as time goes on. One sociology class compiled a directory of community services which awaits printing and distribution. Students of the Social Psycholgy class of the Fall 1986 quarter were doing several community projects, including a survey aimed at determining the perception of the Mountain Women's Exchange within the community and a study on stress in rural women.

Another important means of implementing a competency-based curriculum is granting credit for life or work experience. Negotiations about this between RCEC and Carson-Newman were started and have been encouraging but not successful. Two students have made application for credit for work or life experience. Although this form of credit granting is customary in adult learning programs, it is new to Carson-Newman. If the initial few applications are successful, there will be many other applications undoubtedly. This will represent an important forward step from the conduct of a competency-based curriculum.

The RCEC had other objectives for its activity from 1984 to 1986. Which include the following:

3) To develop leadership skills of the rural women who participate in the development of this college program and who participate in course experiences—at least 30-40 students;

4) To recruit faculty from the parent/sponsoring institution, from local communities and from community organizations with a history of rural community involvement;

5) To design and implement on a quarterly basis, orientation prograns for current and new students and faculty to insure a common sense of goals and directions;

6) To develop a body of materials on rural life and rural studies which would include suggested course outlines, reading lists, resourcees people and activities which can be used in future program development;

7) To work with the liaison person, administration and faculty of the sponsoring institution to develop clearer understanding of the life-styles and educational needs of rural adult students, especially adult women, and an appreciation for the seriousness and quality of the efforts to provide college education within the local communities; and

8) To share the model of organization and curriculum developed by RCEC with other rural communities desiring to initiate their own college programs to develop rural leaders.

These objectives are related to larger goals which are:

1) To continue to develop and evaluate the curriculum and adapt it to the needs of current and future students—refining definitions of competencies and methods of evaluating their attainment;

2) To train leaders in other rural communities interested in initiating a program similar to Rural Communities Educational Cooperative and provide then with the technical assistane for doing so;

3) To provide leadership from our students and involvement in a number of community endeavors;

4) Assist the graduates of RCEC who complete an associate degree to pursue a four-year college education either through individualized external degree programs or on-campus settings; and

5) To promote increased understanding of the needs and the potential of rural women through on-going participation in regional and national networks which represent rural concerns and community based education, such as the Association for Community Based Education, Rural American Women, the Appalachian Development Projects Committee of the Commission on Religion in Appalachia and the Appalachian Institute.

To assess how well RCEC achieved its objectives related to the learning and skill acquisition of its students; the recuitment and orientation of its faculty; and the contribution it has made to community development, we conducted three surveys.

SURVEY RESULTS

We present the survey results in three sections corresponding to the persons surveyed: students, faculty and community leaders. The discussion is further divided according to various categories of questions. The student survey questions fell into four categories 1) who are the students in RCEC; 2) why did they take RCEC courses; 3) what has been the impact of the program on the students and the community; and 4) what is the students' evaluation of the RCEC curriculum. Eighty-five people had taken classes through the RCEC at the time of our survey. We sent surveys to 80 past and present students for whom we had addresses. Forty-six students returned completed surveys.

The Students of RCEC

Our respondents are representative of the students of RCEC. Ninety-one percent, or 77 out of 85 of the RCEC students are women and 89 percent of the survey respondents are women. The ages of the students and the respondents are comparable. The ages of our respondents range from 19 to 45 and are distributed evenly over that range. We did not have precise information on the ages of students but RCEC staff believe our respondents resemble the students in age distribution and range. Almost half, 48 percent of the respondents, are married. Thirty-three percent have never married and 13 percent are divorced. Family income of the respondents varies from $2,400 to $32,000 per year. Only about two-thirds of the respondents answered the question about their family's income. The median income of those responding is $11,000. Thirty-nine percent are from families whose income is below $10,000, while 22.5 percent come from families with incomes at or below $5,000 for 1985. Eighty percent of the respondents received some kind of financial assistance and seventy-two percent of them received Pell grants. Eighty-one percent of all RCEC students received Pell grants in the fall semester of 1986.

Our respondents exemplify the family background and educational attainment of learners in other rural adult education programs. Seventy-two percent of the respondents came from households of from three to five members. Seventy-two percent have children. One respondent had six children, four had four children, but most had one, two or three children. Twenty-five of the respondents, 54 percent, said that they were the major care provider of their children. As to their educational achievement, 69 percent had received high school diplomas, while the remaining 31 percent had passed the high school equivalency test (GED). Fifty-four percent were the first in their family to go to college. Thirty percent were the chief wage earner in their household. Sixty-six percent of respondents have jobs and 50 percent of the students have full time jobs. Only 15 percent of the respondents said they did volunteer work. The vast majority of students responded that it took fifteen minutes or less for them to get to the classes from their home.

Asked about their current educational status, our respondents answered as follows:

50 percent (23) were currently taking RCEC courses (Spring '86);
22 percent (10) were not taking courses, but might continue;
13 percent (6) were attending college independent of RCEC;
11 percent (5) were not taking courses, but planned to continue; and
4 percent (2) were not taking courses and had no plans to continue.

Reasons for Participating in RCEC Courses

Students rated a list of reasons for enrolling in RCEC classes. For each possible reason, respondents could describe it as (1) a "major reason," (2)"somewhat of a reason" or (3)"not at all a reason." RCEC students expressed serious and practical reasons for pursuing their education. The attainment of a college degree is very important to most students and job-preparation and personal development are also very important reasons for RCEC students to participate in classes. Far less frequently mentioned as major reasons for in enrolling classes are family or community betterment. The social aspect of RCEC seems least important among our respondents. Half or more of our respondents indicated that "meeting new people" or "having something to do" were not a reason for their participation. These two were the only items that a majority ranked as not a reason for their participation.

Reason	Major	Minor	Not at all	No answer
	%	%	%	%
To get a college degree	72	22	6.5	0
To be better prepared for a job	67	17	11	4
To feel better about myself	54	33	13	0
To improve my self-confidence	33	46	15	6.5
To learn more about a particular subject	24	59	11	6.5
For my family	20	35	37	9
To better my community	11	43	37	9
To meet new people	6.5	37	50	6.5
For something to do	6.5	22	63	9

The Impact of RCEC on Its Students

Students were asked to their opinions about parts of the RCEC program. The responses indicate a high level of satisfaction with the instruction in the program and general satisfaction with the benefits derived from RCEC. It addition, the students indicated that RCEC met their needs as learners.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
	%	%	%	%	%
Overall instruction has been good	60	40	-	-	-
The courses offered through RCEC generally met your needs as an adult rural student	32	57	6.5	-	4.5
Overall, I have benefitted from my involvement with RCEC.	39	59	-	-	2

The students were then given a list of ten ways in which RCEC might have been helpful to them and given the same five options as in the previous series of statement. Ranked in descending order of agreement, students found RCEC helpful in:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
	%	%	%	%	%
Increasing student's self-confidence	60	40	-	-	-
Obtaining a better knowledge of business	35	49	5	5	7
Learning to communicate one's views more clearly	26	53	12	-	9
Developing one's willingness to speak out and share one's point of view	23	53.5	14	-	9.5
Improving one's decision-making skills	17	59.5	12	-	12
Improving one's competency on the job	19	49	14	-	19
Improving one's efforts at bettering one's community	9	51	14	5	21

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
	%	%	%	%	%
Dealing with interpersonal conflicts	17	39	23	-	21
Motivating one to become more active in one's community	9	12	21	5	16
Finding a job	7	42	13	2	35.5

The pattern of responses indicate enhanced competencies of individuals in the RCEC. Self-confidence, the ability and willingness to speak out, improved decision making are important components of individual empowerment. Many of the respondents also indicated gains in their understanding about business and the competency on the job. The responses to our query about the contribution of RCEC in assisting learners to find a job were disparate perhaps reflecting individual optimism on the one hand and a wait and see attitude on the other.

The students responded to an open-ended question, "How have you benefited from your involvement with RCEC?" The responses indicate an emphasis on RCEC as an opportuity to acquire a college education and the improved access to higher education which RCEC provides. Representative of this sentiment is the statement, "It gave me a start in going to college. It was a good way to begin, easier than going to a large campus after being out of school for years." And "RCEC gave me the chance to open my mind up and learn about things I never expected to know about."

Also common among the open-ended responses were expressions of self-improvement and new interpersonal skills. "It has made me feel more worthwhile and put more self-confidence into everything about me." The individual gains had community consequences. Some respondents felt more prepared "to stand up for myself and others. The RCEC also represented a community of mutual support. "It has enabled discussions with community people I haven't had. It has been a very supportive atmosphere to get through difficult courses."

Students' Opinion About the Curriculum

Students were also asked to identify the most helpful course they had taken through RCEC and explain why they made their choice. Thirty-seven students responded to this question. Almost all courses were cited at least once. The courses with most responses in descending order of number of responses are:

1) Business courses, nine responses: "It was a help to me on my job." "...Because I am in business myself and things I have learned have been beneficial to me." "It pertained to my job." "...(It) helped me understand better about my job and the way big businesses operate." "...Because of the instructors' understanding of our needs and his willingness to help. The course gave me a broader view of the business world." "Excellently taught and everyone got involved." "Has helped me to know what to expect in this type of job, has let me know how best to handle myself in the business world, and has also helped me see what is going on in the world today."

2) Communications, six responses: "...(It) has helped me to speak up and share my point of view, to be a more aggressive person." "...(It) has helped me understand myself better and to speak more freely. It also helped me communicate with others more openly." "I've learned to deal better with the public, be more self-confident and assertive. "...Because it made me understand my community better, and opened doors to what I myself am all about." "It made me realize once again that I am a person with my own rights and not just a mother and a wife."

3) Math, four responses: "I can use it daily and I can help my children with their math." "...Because I substitute teach and math in the upper grades gets very confusing sometimes, and I've been able to help the kids more because of the math I've had." "...Because we learned to work more problems and learned to understand reading problems also."

4) English, three responses: "...Because they taught me how to write and this I need." "This class was a refresher course and I learned alot about writing." "It helped me to express myself more clearly."

5) Literature, American Literature (two responses): "...Because the instructor was excellent and it gave me a better understanding of reading and writing." "...(It) helped prepare me for the way <u>real</u> college classes were supposed to be."

Students also reported which course had been least helpful and why. Only 20 respondents answered this question and 5 others specifically said none of the courses were "least" helpful. The courses receiving most responses to this question are:

1) Political science, five responses: "The one I needed most, but I feel I learned the least." "...Because I felt that generally classes turned into 'gripe sessions.'" "...Because of the way it was taught. I need textbook work along with class discussion to comprehend the effect of material."

2) History, four responses: "...Because history doesn't deal with life situations as of today. It means nothing to me." "...Because it is a constant repeat of what I learned in grade school as well as high

school." "...Because I don't think it is that relevant to what I am interested in." "I enjoyed it, but I haven't been able to use it."

3) Economics, three responses: "I enjoyed the course, but I am trying to get my degree in elementary education. I need more classs toward education." "I don't see how it will ever help me in the things I am interested in. Someday I would like to become an elementary school teacher." "I haven't had a chance to use it yet."

4) Algebra, Math, three responses: "The only reason I that I can find for this course is if a person is a math major." "You really don't use it in everyday life." "I have no use for it."

5) English Composition, two responses: "I suppose it really helped me, but I never liked English when I was in grammar school and that feeling hasn't changed. I just don't like English." "The instructor had no interest in teaching, the job was simply a means of making money."

The students responded to another open-ended question which asked them, "What would you change about the RCEC program to improve it?" Their comments fall into two related categories. First, the students want a wider range of courses. Some realize that an increase in courses would require larger numbers of students. Second, students desired courses which impart specific skills related to job opportunities in fields such as health care or education. Although the two categories, range and specificity, reinforce each other in some ways, they represent different emphases within the educational goals of the students. An example of this is the range of opinions about business courses. Some students felt that the curriculum was too heavily weighted towards business, whereas a number of others desired a greater variety of business courses, especially in applied, business-related skills.

More than anything else, the answers to the curriculum-related questions reflect the diversity of the students and the diversity of educational goals held by those who participate in the RCEC. The desire for and appreciation of applied learning pervades the responses. The nature of the applications varies. One segment of the student population seeks classes that pertain directly to their current and/or future employment. Another seeks primarily a path to a college degree, which in turn provides material support towards achieving a better job or a better sense of self-worth. Some students want the teacher to make no "concessions" to the special circumstances of the rural adult students of RCEC, wanting to be prepared for "the way real classes (are) supposed to be." Others value the teachers' sensitivity to the particular needs of these learners.

FACULTY SURVEYS

Eighteen of the 20 faculty who have taught at RCEC returned their questionnaires. The questions we asked concerned: a) the characteristics of participating faculty; b) the incentives to their participation; and c) the changes they made in their courses for RCEC. Of eighteen respondents, nine had taught one class, four had taught two, two each had taught three and four classes, and one had taught six classes. Ages of the faculty ranged from 28 to 57, with a median of 44.5 years old. Eleven of the faculty were male and seven were female. Teachers had from one to 28 years of teaching experience, with a mean of 13.8 years experience. Thirteen of the teachers reported that their experience was largely in college education. Five said much of their experience came from teaching in high school and two had predominantly had experience in adult education.

Almost equal numbers of faculty heard about RCEC through the Mountain Women's Exchange as through the sponsoring university. Eight heard directly from RCEC and seven heard through the sponsoring university. The remaining three heard about RCEC by word of mouth and other informal means. Six teachers agreed and five strongly agreed that the institution they were affiliated with had been supportive of their participation in RCEC. Sixty-one percent gave a positive response while none disagreed. Ninety-four percent agreed or strongly agreed that they had been provided with an adequate orientation to the goals of the RCEC program. Only one faculty member (one of the earliest participants) found the orientation inadequate. Asked about their pay, ten agreed and two strongly agreed that compensation was adequate. One disagreed with the statement that compensation was adequate, two strongly disagreed and three did not answer. In sum, of those who responded, 80 percent found the compensation adequate and 20 percent did not.

We asked the faculty what was most difficult about teaching in RCEC. The comments are summarized here. For a record of the verbatim responses, see Appendix One. The most difficult aspect of teaching with RCEC reported by the faculty is the travel time. Fifteen out of 18 had to travel over an hour in each direction to and from the RCEC classes. One teacher made a four hour trip and one travelled 2 hours and 45 minutes each way.

While most of the faculty valued the experience of working with the RCEC students, some characteristics of the students were cited as difficult aspects of participating in RCEC. Complaints fell into two main categories. The first centers on the students' lack of skills. Various teachers said students lacked study skills and writing skills, needed more time to understand the explanation of concepts and did not know how to prepare for tests. One instructor mentioned that the students' need for relevance made teaching more difficult.

The second category of comments concerned student attitudes. The low self-esteem of the students was cited, along with their complaints about the difficulty of the material and their expectations of high grades. Some of the learners' habits, such as smoking and eating junkfood snacks, made participation in RCEC less attractive for some faculty. These habits were less important than the differences of age, income, and family responsibilities that distinguished RCEC students from those on campus or of traditional age.

Two faculty members cited other impediments to effective particiption including the lack of audio-visual resources and laboratories. Three mentioned the difficulty of having one three-hour class a week. It was hard for one to teach math and keep it interesting for three hours. Others cited the less than usual frequency of contact with students as a difficulty. Because of the long distance another teacher had to travel to get to class, his classes were taught for three hours Friday night and three more hours first thing on Saturday morning. The entire course was taught in just five six-hour sessions. The tendency to concentrate classes into fewer longer sessions is a problem, but is necessary to conserve the time and energy spent travelling to the classes.

Faculty Curriculum Adaptations

Faculty members responded to the question, "How have you structured or modified your course(s) and teaching to make them more relevant to RCEC students?" Their comments indicated the faculty had made a wide variety of modifications in both the presentation of course material and in the content of the material they taught. There was a wide range of responses from those who enthusiastically responded that they had made no changes in their courses to those who carefully planned their course modifications well in advance with input from prospective students and RCEC board members.

One instructor noted that the pace of the course was changed because students needed to start slowly with the most basic material, but progressed very rapidly because they were so highly motivated. Another indicated that it was necessary to follow the text more closely and devoted more time to amplifying and explaining the text. Several made an effort to use the students unique setting to pedagogical advantage, for instance by "having students relate stories about their relatives, a sort of oral history. Having students share historically relevant articles, ie. old newspapers, confederate money, slave shackles, family bibles and deeds, etc."

Other faculty made fewer modifications. One respondent tersely replied to the question if he had made modifications for the RCEC course: "I did not!" Several instructors indicated that the nature of the material they taught made course modifications unnecessary. Some of them said that such changes weren't needed for introductory level courses.

Some of the faculty clearly perceived a need to adapt their courses to meet the needs of the non-traditional learners who study with RCEC. Part of this group was satisfied that adequate modifications had been made, while another part pointed to limitations of time and facilities that had inhibited their ability to make desired modifications. Other faculty felt that course modifications were unnecessary or undesirable especially in courses such as typing or intoductory math. A minority of the faculty feel that making modifications to enhance the relevance of their courses would "water down" the course or lower academic standards.

One instructor's response to the question of what modifications she had made in her course captured some of the tensions involved between maintaining standards and enhancing relevance. "(I) have encouraged use of topics for student writing and research that forces them to evaluate and appreciate their own resources. (I) have, at the same time, tried to make them aware that they are receiving the same basics as they would on a regular college or university campus. THEY NEED THIS! For their biggest need is to believe that they are capable (or will arrive at the capability) to cope intelligently with the "outside" world."

Some faculty indicated limits on their ability to modify courses for RCEC students. They cited a lack of time to make all the curriculum changes that they desired. Specifically, faculty members mentioned the need for more time before the first class to prepare, more time with the students each week and longer courses in general to build on the students' progress.

The faculty was evenly split in their responses to the question, "Has teaching in RCEC been significantly different from your experience within a traditional college setting?" Seven responded "yes," five "no" and five said the question was "not applicable." The seven faculty responding yes identified the character of the students; their eagerness to learn; and their clear sense of personal goals as characteristics distinguishing RCEC students from traditional, on-campus learners. Also mentioned were the RCEC's students family and job obligations.

Male and Female, Campus and Community Faculty

The eleven male and seven female faculty did not differ greatly in their assessment of their teaching experience. In general, the female faculty tended to strongly agree where the male faculty would agree and strongly disagree where the men simply disagreed. More of the women thought teaching RCEC courses had been significantly different from teaching in a traditional setting. Four of the five women who responded to the question said the experience was significantly different compared to only 3 of the 7 men who answered

the question. More of the women faculty recognized an improvement in the decision-making skills of the students.

There was surprisingly little difference in the responses of the faculty recruited by RCEC and those recruited by the two sponsoring institutions. The faculty recruited by RCEC were more satisfied with the orientation, whereas the only respondent who was dissatisfied with the orientation was from Roane State. The faculty recruited by the two colleges had a tendency to more strongly agree that an increase in the various student competencies was apparent.

The responses to the open-ended questions about modifications to the courses, limitations to such modifications and differences between teaching at RCEC and teaching in a traditional setting revealed a striking similarity between the two groups. Those who took great pains to adapt their courses and those who did not choose to vary their courses were among each of the two groups of faculty. An admiration for the strength and motivation of the students of RCEC was apparent virtually among all the faculty members.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

In assessing the community perception and the impact in the community of RCEC, we used three methods. First, we mailed surveys to twenty leaders in the community, such as a bank manager and the high school principal. Secondly, we reviewed articles from local and regional publications about the program. Finally, we assessed the impact of community-oriented projects that developed out of course work.

Twenty surveys were sent out to community leaders. A second mailing of surveys and follow up phone calls were made to those who failed to return the surveys. Six completed surveys were ultimately returned. Two of the leaders who returned the surveys were active in the Mountain Women's Exchange and involved in establishing the RCEC project. The four other surveys came from local educators, two, and people in the tourist trade and social services. All of those who returned surveys were extremely positive in their asessment of RCEC. The low rate of return of the surveys and the relation to RCEC of two of the six respondents qualify the information gained from the survey.

All respondents agreed, and most strongly agreed, that RCEC contributes to the preservation of the local community and to the development of local leadership; that the students exhibit increased self-confidence, decision-making skills, willingness to speak out; and that they had observed improved efforts at improving the community on the part of the students. It was suggested that RCEC find more teachers locally and make more contacts with local business, civic leaders and potential employers of RCEC graduates.

A survey of newspaper articles about RCEC indicates that the program has been publicized and that its goal of providing relevant education that is accessible and affordable has been communicated in the local press and in regional publications. Articles announcing orientation programs and orientation courses appear regularly in the local newspapers. The Jellico paper, The Advance-Sentinal, has provided the most in depth coverage, with extensive quotes from students about their goals, their enthusiasm and their desire to create a relevant curriculum for themselves. The approval of the FIPSE grant for RCEC received a prominent front page headline in The Advance-Sentinel. Articles have also appeared in the Whitely (Ky.) Republican, The Clinton Courier News and The Appalachian Observer News, as well as in regional publications of the Appalachian Alliance and the Appalachian Educational Opportunity Center.

The community-oriented projects produced in classes are an important source of interaction between the program and the surrounding community. The nature trail at the alternative energy demonstration site of Appalachia - Science in the Public Interest (ASPI) is the most extensive community project but seldom used by local residents. It is important to the ASPI program, of course. Students of a sociology class compiled a community service directory for the area that has not yet been distributed in the community due to a lack of funds for printing. Students are currently working on several community-oriented projects for a Social Psychology course offered this Fall (1986). For example, one project involves students in a survey of community perceptions of the Mountain Women's Exchange and another project has addressed the issue of stress in rural women.

The impact of the profound increase in empowerment and leadership among the students is only beginning to be felt outside the program itself. The greatest impact is internal to the program, with new and different students joining the RCEC board and taking charge of the program. The students are focusing their energies on enhancing the RCEC program and securing the gains already made. Of course, the first RCEC students are still in the midst of working towards their degrees. This, combined with their responsibilities to their families, to their jobs and to the management of the RCEC program, has limited the impact of the program on the community external to the program. We can look forward to an increased impact on the community as the program becomes more established and as students complete their degrees.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Clearly, the RCEC is making higher education accessible and affordable for men and, very importantly, women in a rural area with few educational or economic opportunities. It is also attempting to make that education relevant to the specific needs of the communities where its learners reside. Thus RCEC blends several important

factors: adult education; new links with institutions of higher education; a competency-based curriculum; and leadership development for community and economic development.

RCEC is like other rural adult education innovations in several ways. Its students, like other rural adult learners, differ from traditional campus or urban adult learners. The RCEC student is older, has less formal education, fewer study skills, less confidence in her or his study competency, major family responsibilities and employment that decrease the time available for study. They also have less income than other students and restricted opportunities for education. On the other hand, they are a very motivated group of learners who earn positive assessment from the faculty for their eagerness to learn and their clear sense of personal goals. The students' desire to learn is indicated by their preference for a wider selection of course offerings, which the limited number of students and the difficult logistics make very difficult and the high rate of retention indicated from the responses we received. Only two of of our 46 respondents indicated that they had no intention of continuing in RCEC or some other form of higher education.

The competency-based curriculum of RCEC has many elements of the competency curriculum of Alverno College. In fact, many of the RCEC competencies could be grouped into related clusters, communication for example. This would not only make the rural competencies clearer but it might sharpen the focus of the staff and students of RCEC and provide them more direction is adapting the curriculum, evaluating the curriculum and assessing the progress of students.

RCEC is also similar to other innovations in adult education in the difficulty it has had in finding, keeping and collaborating with a host academic institution. The colleges that have supported RCEC have curriculum requirements and financial needs that affect their willingness and ability to work with RCEC. State regulations impeded the collaboration of RCEC and Roane State Community College. RCEC's experience with Carson-Newman suggests several areas of potential conflict. These include the incoporation and approval of faculty from outside Carson-Newman in the RCEC program; the creation and recognition of courses specific to RCEC; and the use of new credit-granting mechanisms such as credit for life/work experience in lieu of class work.

Depsite these sources of conflict and in the light of the experience at other campuses, RCEC has had more success with its academic hosts than other innovative programs have had with other academic hosts. RCEC began in the wake of other college off-campus programs in Jellico that some residents considered inadequate because they thought they were administered entirely by the college without adequate regard for the learners. Clearly, one important factor of successful collaboration is the relation of the mission of the institution to the objectives and needs of the adult education

program. All evidence suggests that the administration of Carson-Newman finds the RCEC program consistent with the mission and philosophy of the college. The college creates and preserves a financial incentive for faculty by compensating them on an overload basis for teaching in RCEC. The college has some incentive to participate in the hope of recruiting students from RCEC to campus for full-time study. In addition, the program is financially self-sufficient which removes a large disincentive to the college's participation. A few faculty have developed scholarly interests in the region as a result of the program and that is a benefit to the college.

RCEC's collaboration with Carson-Newman is all the more remarkable because the administration of Carson-Newman undertook cooperation with RCEC shortly after an unsatisfactory experience in another off-campus, adult education program. That unsatisfactory experience as well as the success of RCEC so far illustrate the importance of a liaison of the community sponsor to the college. RCEC and Carson-Newman are grappling with a set of important issues of new forms of education for rural, adult learners which are compatible with the mission and philosophy of each. But collaboration requires both to adjust their ordinary practice or preference to the needs of the other. They share this problem and process with other such efforts and have been more successful than most. A liaison with the community sponsor is most important in advocating on behalf of the students and representing them in the negotiated quality of these educational programs.

RCEC shares the logistical problems of other rural adult education programs. There is the problem of travel for faculty and the lack of resources, libraries, audio-visuals, laboratories, for learners and faculty alike. In addition, the faculty have to make a special effort to adapt to a set of learners who are different in age, economic class, learning styles and needs, and life responsibilities than other students with whom they are more familiar.

But in all these ways, RCEC is not only like other rural adult education programs but like other sets of community development efforts dating back to the War on Poverty. After community leaders respond to community needs, they ultimately come upon the problems of changing institutions which have the resources required to continue community initiatives. RCEC like local community-initiated health clinics of the area and other community service innovations have had to struggle and contend with recruiting, orienting and retaining a set of professionals to provide services. In some cases, this effort includes acquiring certification for a set of professionals willing to help but who are able to contribute only if permitted by an institution or a set of institutions beyond the control of local residents. These institutions often have not moved to address the community problems on their own or before the community initiative and sometimes see in these community initiatives criticism of their work

or threats to their financial base. Ultimately then, local change to address problems entails institutional change or new forms of cooperation.

There is some good in this difficult task of winning collaboration. Institutional cooperation is a safeguard on quality of service. This is an important criteria for some people who use the community-initiated services even if those services are intended by those who start them to be different and better than inaccessible services. Institutional cooperation is also imperative for a reliable supply of professionals to serve a community program.

RCEC has not only to win on-going professional support, like other community service innovations, but it has to deal with the political economy of its service. The political economy of Appalachia provides little social capital investment for services. Programs like the Pell tuition grants place tuition costs within the reach of low-income people but not enough of them and in large enough dollar amounts to provide a solid, economic base for the conduct of community services. Poor regions, poor people and poor services are the stimuli for community initiatives such as RCEC but this triad of poverty also binds a political economy to which community services must devise an alternative if they are to continue.

Given the difficulty of finding professional support and providing a political economy for alternative community services, the RCEC is all the more remarkable for continuing three years and showing increased enrollments. Student enrollment for the courses in Fall 1986 reached their highest level of 71. The ordinary difficulty of maintaining a community service was made extraordinarily difficult by a change of academic host after the second year and more stringent eligibility criteria for Pell tuition grants.

It is important to consider RCEC as a community organization and to assess its role in higher education. As Gittell led us to expect, RCEC has reached the hard to reach adult learner better than programs on the campuses of either the academic host or the numerous institutions who are not hosting RCEC. Because it has an organizational base, RCEC has had staying power to weather several transitions and to accumulate experience in the conduct of its program. There were transitions within RCEC itself. There were three curriculum development coordinators in three years. In addition, there was turnover in the funding agency, especially in the final year, which RCEC dealt with successfully.

RCEC is also able to conduct other activities well because it is a community organization with other purposes and a goal of economic and leadership development. Of special importance is the orientation that RCEC conducts uniquely well for students and faculty. In addition, the RCEC is uniquely suited to make dissemination efforts with other community groups. During the two year grant period, staff

and students of RCEC have participated in numerous conferences and regional meetings. The RCEC staff has also produced a video tape with which to share information of RCEC with faculty, potential students and interested community groups.

These characteristics and activities suggest that community organizations such as RCEC can provide guidance for academic institutions and mediate between the needs of individual learners and the local community as Martorana and Piland suggest. More importantly, however, RCEC represents in the successful conduct of its program the entrepreneurship in collecting resources and addressing them to needs which is one of the competencies it seeks to impart. This entrepreneurship is a necessary but not sufficient condition of economic development, especially the type Rosenfeld suggests is appropriate for the rural South. The participation of students in the cooperative form of management of RCEC is an important apprenticeship for leadership and development of alternative services and economic activity. It is the most immediate and obvious apprenticeship available to students in RCEC to develop leadership and development skills. At present, a new curriculum coordinator is receiving training. She is a RCEC student and continues the tradition of the Mountain Women's Exchange of beginning services that employ local women, over sixty at present, and that, with time, come under the direction of local women.

But the community development ambitions of RCEC also pose a problem. Without those ambitions there would not be a RCEC. But once RCEC opened its doors to as many community residents as it could accommodate, it included people with diverse opinions some of which diverge from the intentions of the founders of RCEC. Any organization faces the problem of continuity, growth and the impact that growth has on the mission of an organization and on the consensus that existed about the mission originally. Accommodating divergent student aspirations is also part of the "negotiated quality" which Hyland suggested is part of adult education programs with a community-base.

There are diverse hopes for RCEC among its students. Some are looking for broad self-improvement skills and others seek specific skills related to work competencies and qualifications. Some students suggest less emphasis on RCEC as a program for low-income women and more emphasis on it as a program of educational opportunity for women and men who are isolated from such opportunies ordinarily. This is especially important, this last group of students maintains, if the program is to grow to larger numbers and permit a wider selection of courses.

Despite the diversity there is consensus on some of the strengths of the RCEC among its learners and faculty. Students in general feel they are benefiting and that their needs are met in the RCEC curriculum. This positive student assessment is echoed by the faculty responses which indicate a high level of satisfaction with the

increased competency they observe among their students in the conduct of the courses. It is instructive that the most popular course of the curriculum, business, was popular because of the quality of its instructor and the immediate relevancy and applicability of its content. Communications was also very popular because of the skills the students acquired. History, political science and economics were less popular courses perhaps in part because they were not as immediately applicable and imparted fewer obvious skills to the students. Math and English were listed among the most popular and least popular depending in large part on whether or not they provided students with skills they felt they could apply everyday.

The relation of accessible and affordable competency-based education to economic development is yet to be seen. It is a difficult association to make especially when the education is a four year course of studies. There is evidence of increased competencies among learners, increased assertiveness and other forms of leadership. The organization in which these changes have been most marked is RCEC itself but their presence there offers evidence of the achievement of RCEC and hope that in time the students of RCEC will find and create great economic opportunity and an improved set of community services that go with it.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The continued success of RCEC as an innovation to provide accessible and affordable relevant education to a group of rural adults in an area of little educational and economic opportunity depends on the continuation of several measures. First, RCEC should refine its statement of the competency-based curriculum using the information it has already and perhaps information it can acquire from its expanded number of students. If the present list of competencies is organized into fewer and more general competencies, it would be useful on several accounts. First, it would be clearer to colleges with whom RCEC works what learning outcomes RCEC aspires to. Second, the shorter list would permit RCEC to use the competency list as part of its evaluation of students and their progress. This evaluation is not conducted at present and must be if competency is to be central to the curriculum. Such evaluation would be of assistance to the students and provide more individual attention. Third, a shorter and more precise competency list would assist RCEC greatly in the orientation of new faculty to RCEC.

Orientation is a second area that requires attention. Curriculum development is at an important turning point. Orientation, thorough and timely, is an important part of giving faculty incentive and information to make course adaptations. Without input from RCEC and stress on the specific learning outcomes it hopes for and the context of economic and leadership development, faculty will be tempted to use what is most familiar with a minimum of adaptation and change. RCEC

must continue to develop its ability to articulate its learning aspirations and to encourage faculty to make appropriate adjustments to the needs of its learners, including the competencies sought.

This ability has to be compared with RCEC's power to implement what it hopes for. It is dependent on institutions of higher education to grant credits and award degrees. It has found a satisfactory relationship despite a few trouble spots. Carson-Newman deserves praise for its effort with RCEC and for the manner in which it interprets its mission and philosophy to incoporate its work with RCEC. It has accepted the challenge, not once but twice, of serving adult, off-campus learners. With RCEC, Carson-Newman has gone further than its previous effort and now serves adults in a rural, isolated area in collaboration with a group that has goals of economic and leadership development.

While RCEC serves the college well as a liaison, it also makes demands over the program and on behalf of learners that are not part of the ordinary practice of on-campus practice. Some specific items of contention include expanded credit-granting mechanisms and incoporating new courses and new faculty into the curriculum. In regard the latter, there are few guides except the needs of RCEC learners to acquire appropriate competencies and the need of Carson-Newman or any college to assure the quality of course instruction. In regard expanded credit-granting mechanisms, there is literature and experience on petitions for life or work experience and other alternative mechanisms for awarding credit. The essays which go into these petitions are often precisely the reflection that college courses are intended to stimulate and often exemplify the intended outcome of course work through a different means. The needs of adult learners in general and the difference in their place in life and learning styles suggest the wisdom of any college in a program like RCEC to consider amending policies fashioned for a set of younger, full-time learners.

Faculty and students mentioned smoking in class as an irritant and staff and the appropriate committees of RCEC should look into the policies and practices at present and the preferences of participants.

Financial access is an important part of the RCEC and policies and practices have been fashioned to administer the scholarship fund in light of increased tuition costs and the needs of students. Constant attention to the scholarship fund is appropriate as well as continuing, on-going efforts to expand the funds.

In light of its success, its operation of three years and its unique fit of goals, it may be appropriate to form a board of visitors to RCEC. Such a board might visit once or twice a year briefly to review matters of organization and curriculum and to assist the college and RCEC on any matters of administration or implementation. In order to do this, the board members should be distinguished

educators and others familiar with programs of adult education, competency-based curriculum education or rural economic development.

The importance of RCEC's goals and the quality of its work thus far make RCEC an important innovation. They distinguish all those who have contributed to RCEC for the calibre of their important work and for their willingness to take on a difficult task. Hopefully, this evaluation will encourage the people involved with RCEC presently to continue in their resolve and will offer some guidance to them for the future.

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APPENDIX I

ANSWERS TO OPEN-ENDED SURVEY QUESTIONS

Student Responses

Question: How have you benefited from your involvement with RCEC?

o "I have gotten the chance to go to school where I wouldn't have otherwise."

o "My classes have helped me feel more confident about reaching my career goals."

o "I have a little better understanding about our government and the world we live in, a little better understanding about my job in general."

o "The chance to get a college degree."

o "It helped me to understand the importance of a real education and getting it now while I am young, so I don't have to struggle to find a job later."

o "It has helped me feel better about myself and also allowed me to be able to interact with other people."

o "Only that I, and a few of my friends, got an early start on college."

o "Earned more credits towards my degree."

o "More effective writing"

o "Yes! I have more confidence in myself, in meeting and talking to a group."

o "I have learned a lot and really enjoyed the experience of learning and being around intellectuals."

o "I've been able to take classes I needed off campus near my home."

o "Getting an education. Meeting new people. Having a better feeling about myself"

o "Yes! Because I have a family, it's been easier taking these courses than going full-time on a campus."

o "I got in college full-time, it gave me the chance I needed."

o "I have been given an opportunity for a college education that I may not have otherwise had."

o "I have benefited from RCEC by being able to take college courses at night, close to home."

o "I have seen the need for knowledge and a group determined enough to do something about it. That helps."

o "My self-confidence has returned. I am not afraid to stand up for myself and others."

o "I am now more open with people in general. I am more confident about myself."

o "I have learned more about business and it has made me feel better about about myself."

Question: What would you change about the RCEC program to improve it?

o "No smoking in class."

o "Nothing except a better way of letting people know about our program."

o "Offer more classes that we need to get our degree."

o "Change the field in classes."

o "More variety. Maybe some courses in medicine."

o "Nothing."

o "Try to offer a wider variety of courses, not just business courses."

o "Not really anything. It seems to run just fine, except for the smoking in class."

o "Get more students."

o "I don't think anything needs to be changed. I just think we need a way to let everyone know that RCEC is here for them and build up our program more."

o "Go back to Roane State and offer classes related to nursing or any in the medical field."

o "Have some computer classes and more business classes and typing."

o "We need a better variety of subjects to choose from."

o "I would stop emphasizing that the program is oriented toward the poor. I would have more upbeat advertising for the program."

o "I would like to have some vocational classes closer to home, rather than having to drive so far alone. I think we need training for jobs now, then go on and get our college degree."

o "There are a few students interested in education degrees. Because there are no education courses offered, they have had to go to campus full-time. If I could change anything, it would be to help every student involved with RCEC."

o "I don't think I would change anything, but add a childcare center, so we would be sure our children are safe while we were in class."

o "That more students have a say in the courses to be taken."

o "Lengthening the timespan the teacher has to teach a certain subject."

o "Better instructions for the teachers."

o "Classes are generally geared to business programs and I think there should be more variety of classes, because not everyone is going to be a business major."

o "To work with the students more on a one-to-one basis, about their goals and how to best help them reach them in an easy manner with a one-on-one conversation."

o "Explain in <u>full</u> detail to first-time students about drop slips and GPA and how it can effect your financial aid."

o "Nothing there is no way to give a class to everyone's own whim."

Faculty Responses

Question: How have you structured or modified your course/s to make them relevant to the RCEC students?

o "Use of different media - films, slides, etc."

o "I adhered to the text more than I would have wanted to. The students are all different, but generally I found they needed more time with amplifying or explaining what was in the text."

o "I used the same content from the text as I use regularly, but varied the discussion and examples to relate to the experiences of RCEC students. I had my own goals and purposes for them as well as being aware of what they wanted from the course. I did not change the content as much as they would have liked."

o "I made no such efforts as they seemed unnecessary."

o "More time on in-class projects, less time on out-of-class projects."

o "Very little change."

o "Students needed to start with the basics. They learned quickly, however. Consequently, we got off to a slow start, but gained speed. I tried to use business applications, when possible. I tried to make students realize the value of logical, clear thinking."

o "I spent several hours discussing with the staff and potential students the design and content of the class-seminar and incorporated their ideas and mine into the final course plans."

o "The given subject was taught on the introductory level. At this level there was very little need to alter the course. I had given this much thought before and throughout the class and would teach the course much the same way given similar circumstances."

o "Involving people with local applications of principle learned."

o "Determine their areas of interest and use these areas within the course."

o "I worked with a small group of students both before and after the course to plan and implement a survey of social services in the community. It helped students to be more aware of the resources or the lack of them in the community. This research could help the community fill gaps in the social service system as well as a resource to refer people with need to the appropriate resources. All the students participated during the course."

o "Added discussion, especially on community economic development."

o "I focused the subject matter of the course on the experience(s) of the students."

o "I first found the need of each student through a writing assignment, then geared my teaching 'individually' as much as possible. (Since this was a small class it was easier than if the class were large.)"

o "In some ways, I've chosen a text which I would not have chosen at this point on campus because it more directly relates the theory of my general field to applications. I've selected some teaching materials which I wouldn't use on campus because they include examples which the rural mountain women audience identify with more completely."

o "I did not!"

Question: What have been the major factors limiting your ability to make such modifications?

o "The course I taught has great relevance as it is and it should not be 'watered down' or otherwise altered."

o "Availability of media equipment and materials"

o "Would have had to have advance or prior knowledge of what RCEC wanted and then to have had the time to revise content by working with key students and individuals of Mountain Women's Exchange."

o "Time. I found that by the time I had the students to begin to write, the course was practically over."

o "Limited contact (one night per week)."

o "Time! It takes time to prepare to be truly creative."

o "None."

o "Lack of laboratories."

o "Not much change was needed."

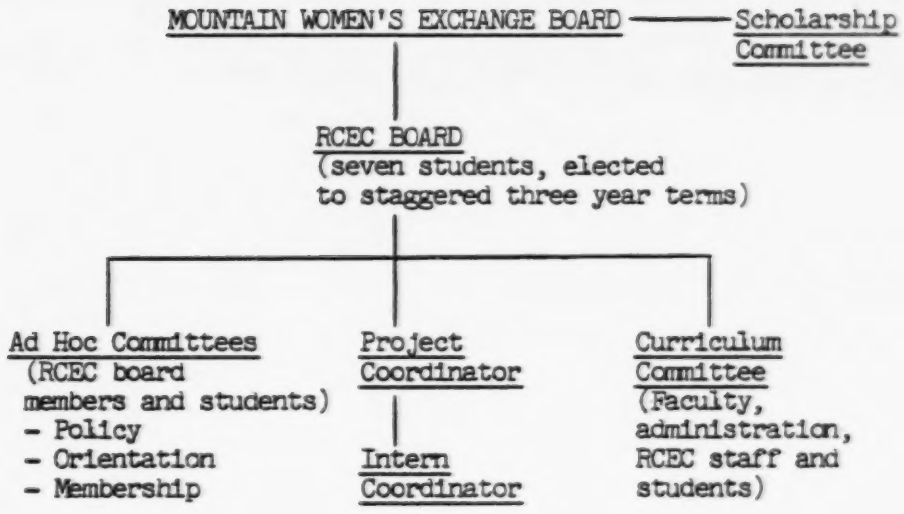
o "Apprehension both by the students and, to some degree, by a few (thank heavens, not many!) of those overseeing the program that these students could, in fact, succeed."

o "Preparation time - from point of knowing when I will be teaching the course to when I begin. Lack of convenient opportunity to interact with participants and get a sense of who they are."

o "Time - the quarter is too short. Students must move on to other courses. The project was never completed in the manner envisioned."

o "None"

APPENDIX II: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF RCEC



APPENDIX III:

Classes Offered Through RCEC, Spring 1983 to Fall 1986.

Spring 1983	Number of Students
Introduction to Analysis I (Math 1110)	21
English Composition I (1010)	22
Total Enrollment	25
Summer 1983	
General Psychology (1010)	19
Principles of Economics (2010)	19
Total Enrollment	21
Fall 1983	
English Composition I (1010)	25
English Composition II (1020)	15
Survey of American History I (2110)	24
Introduction to Analysis I (Math 1110)	12
Total Enrollment	42
Winter 1984	
English Composition II (1020)	20
English Composition III (1030)	14
General Psychology II (1020)	20
Introduction to Analysis II (Math 1120)	15
Total Enrollment	36
Spring 1984	
English Composition III (1030)	18
Basic Speech Communication (2410)	12
Introduction to Analysis (Math 1130)	12
Environmental Science (1120)	19
Total Enrollment	34
Summer 1984	
Orientation	19

Fall 1984	Number of Students
American Literature I (2140)	16
Survey of American History (2120)	21
Typing I (1010)	22
English Composition I (1010)	9
Total Enrollment	33

Winter 1985	
American Literatue II (2160)	11
Introduction to Political Science	21
Survey of the Earth Sciences	12
Survey of American History I (2110)	10
Total Enrollment	25

Spring 1985	
Typing II (1020)	19
Introduction to Sociology (2010)	27
Survey of American History III (2130)	27
Total Enrollment	36

Summer 1985	
Orientation	9

Fall 1985	
Introduction to Business (BAD 130)	18
English Composition I (ENG 131)	5
Letter and Report Writing (ENG 231)	14
Intermediate Algebra (MATH 131)	10
Communications and Community Development (CA 390)	16
Total Enrollment	26

Spring '86	
Principles of Macroeconomics (ECON 231)	20
Principles od Microeconomics (ECON 232)	20
Survey of the Old Testament (REL 130)	14
English Composition II (132)	4
Total Enrollment	24

Fall 1986	Number of Students
Principles of Accounting (ACCT 231)	35
Principles of Management (MGT 331)	41
English Composition I (ENG 131)	22
Survey of the New Testament (REL 131)	44
Social Psychology (PSY 331)	21
Total Enrollment	75